

Tennessee Pollution Prevention Partnership Success Story



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Green Energy Purchase

The Member

The University of Tennessee has an enrollment of 25,500 undergraduate and graduate students on the 550 acre Knoxville campus. As the state's flagship comprehensive research institution, the University of Tennessee's primary purpose is to move forward the frontiers of human knowledge and enrich and elevate society. One of the largest employers in Knox County, over 8,100 faculty and staff members are employed at the Knoxville campus. In the spring of 2004 The University emphasized its commitment to campus environmental initiatives through the adoption of an Environmental Policy statement.

The Story

The University of Tennessee's Knoxville campus was one of the first organizations to purchase green energy through the TVA Green Power Switch program. In May of 2000 the university purchased one mega-block (375 blocks) of green power from the newly instituted program.

During the fall of 2003 and spring of 2004, students concerned with the use of non-renewable resources in campus energy production devised a means to add an additional environmental fee onto basic student fees. A portion of this fee was proposed to be used to purchase additional green power blocks. Students voted and approved the fee through a student referendum in the spring of 2004. In the summer of 2005 the Board of Trustees approved the fee of \$5.00/semester for in-state students

and \$30.00/semester for out-of-state student which enabled the additional green power purchase.

The Success

Initiated in the fall of 2005, The University of Tennessee is now purchasing an additional \$144,000 of green power from the TVA Green Power Switch program each year. This purchase increases the university's green power purchase from 375 blocks to 3,375 blocks or by 6,075,000 kilowatt-hours of electricity annually. With this new commitment, green power now accounts for 2.5% of the university's annual electrical usage allowing the university to become an EPA Green Power Partner.

The Pollution Prevented

The purchase of 3,375 blocks of green power by the University is equivalent to planting over 1,000 acres of trees or recycling more than 700,000 pounds of aluminum each year. Green power purchased by The University of Tennessee offsets approximately 6,000 tons of emissions (more specifically 5,938 tons of CO₂, 17 tons of NO_x, and 44 tons of SO_x nationally) each year from production of this same quantity of electricity from fossil fuels.

November, 2005